Extension of Bilaspur Airport

2829. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning to upgrade Raipur airport into international airport;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government would consider extending runways with additional parking bays at Raipur and Bilaspur airports with sufficient infrastructure and if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Government would provide additional flights from Raipur and Bilaspur to Delhi and connect other major cities and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the details of steps taken by Government to connect Raipur, Durg, Bhilai and Korba with other major cities of Madhya Pradesh and Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Airports Authority of India (AAI) has a proposal for extension of runway upto 7500 feet and associated pavements including apron at Raipur airport. AAI has no plan to upgrade infrastructure facility at Bilaspur airport due to non-receipt of demand from any schedule airline to operate regular services through Bilaspur.

(d) and (e) Airlines are free to commence new air service or provide additional services from any airport in any sector in India based on the commercial viability, availability of aircraft etc. subject to route dispersal guidelines issued by the Government in this regard.

Catering expenses of IA

2830. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the catering expenses of the Indian Airlines are abnormally high; and